

leadership on this effort, I do not think this provision would be in the bill and he deserves our credit and our support for that leadership.

This bill also provides a framework for VA to achieve cost savings at the Audie Murphy VA Medical Center in San Antonio, TX, through contracts with a non-Federal institution for construction and shared use of an energy production facility.

I would like to commend my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. TEJEDA], for his hard work on this provision. While Mr. TEJEDA is not here on the floor today because of a recent operation, our debt of thanks goes out to him. And if he happens to be watching this today, I know I speak on behalf of all of my colleagues in this House in saying we wish him well and appreciate his leadership and input on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, once again, it must be either a Monday or a Tuesday and it must once again be veterans legislation, because the chairman of the committee, the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. STUMP], and the ranking member, the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. MONTGOMERY], have done their business one more time. They have crafted, with the help of the gentleman from Arkansas [Mr. HUTCHINSON], a bipartisan piece of legislation that is important to our Nation's veterans and they have brought it to the floor without discord, without fighting.

Mr. Speaker, there will not be anyone in the press gallery reporting on this, but, hopefully, once again, as happened last week and so many times before, the cooperative efforts of Mr. STUMP and Mr. MONTGOMERY have resulted in positive, good, constructive legislation coming through this House that will benefit millions of our Nation's veterans who have served our country.

Mr. MONTGOMERY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. EDWARDS. I yield to the gentleman from Mississippi.

Mr. MONTGOMERY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's mentioning the gentleman from Texas [Mr. TEJEDA], who is a member of the committee, and we are certainly pulling for him.

One thing I talked to the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. STUMP] about is, usually veterans bills are always up first in number. This time we are at the bottom, but I am sure that correction will be looked into, and I appreciate the gentleman's yielding.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. I am sure they just saved the best for last.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to congratulate the gentleman from Mississippi, [Mr. MONTGOMERY] and the gentleman from Arizona, [Mr. STUMP] and I urge support of this bill.

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the very diligent work of

the gentleman from Texas [Mr. EDWARDS]. He is always there, always willing to compromise, and stays right there. I thank both he and the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. FOX] for resolving the issues of the POW-MIT problem of flying the flag at the VA centers and in working out their differences, and I commend both of them.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. FOX].

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I too want to thank very much the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. STUMP], the chairman of the committee, and the ranking member, the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. MONTGOMERY], and, of course, my colleague who has worked with me on this bill, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. EDWARDS], for his help in making this day possible, and also to the gentleman from Arkansas [Mr. HUTCHINSON], the chairman of the subcommittee, and to my good friend, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SMITH], for his efforts in moving ahead this important veterans legislation.

In addition to extending expiring health care authorities, we act today to honor our commitment to the 2,202 brave American soldiers who are still missing or unaccounted for, and to their families.

It is our duty to remember these proud warriors and their families and to do everything within our power to obtain a full accounting. Particularly in light of the President's recent normalization of relations with Vietnam, we must ensure that we remain vigilant. Mr. Speaker, in our duty to American POW and MIA's. Today I am proud to join my colleagues on the Veterans' Affairs Committee in offering H.R. 2353, which includes a provision to have the POW/MIA flag flown daily at each Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center until the President determines that the fullest possible accounting has been made.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, the National League of Families POW/MIA flag has been recognized by law as the Symbol of the Nation's concern and commitment to resolving as fully as possible the data on Americans still prisoner, missing, and unaccounted for. It is appropriate that this flag be flown at the institutions which we have established to care for those who have served our great country.

The POW/MIA flag is already flown daily at the Coatesville VA Medical Center in Coatesville, PA. Veterans there are grateful for this visible symbol of the concern and commitment of the U.S. Government to their missing brethren.

I would like to thank again Chairman STUMP, ranking member MONTGOMERY, Chairman HUTCHINSON, ranking member EDWARDS, with whom I have worked with so long, the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. SMITH, the American Legion, and the national

POW/MIA legislative network for their support and I urge my colleagues to fully support H.R. 2353.

Mr. MONTGOMERY. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RIGGS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas [Mr. STUMP] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2353, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 5 p.m.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 28 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 5 p.m.

□ 1700

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. RIGGS) at 5 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5, rule I, the Chair will now put the question on each question on which further proceedings were postponed earlier today in the order in which that question was entertained.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

First, the approval of the Journal, followed by votes on H.R. 2070 de novo and H.R. 2353 by the yeas and nays.

The Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the time for any electronic vote after the first such vote in this series.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I, the pending business is the question of the Speaker's approval of the Journal of the last day's proceedings.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. MOLINARI. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.